Will temperature checks of employees make workplaces safe?
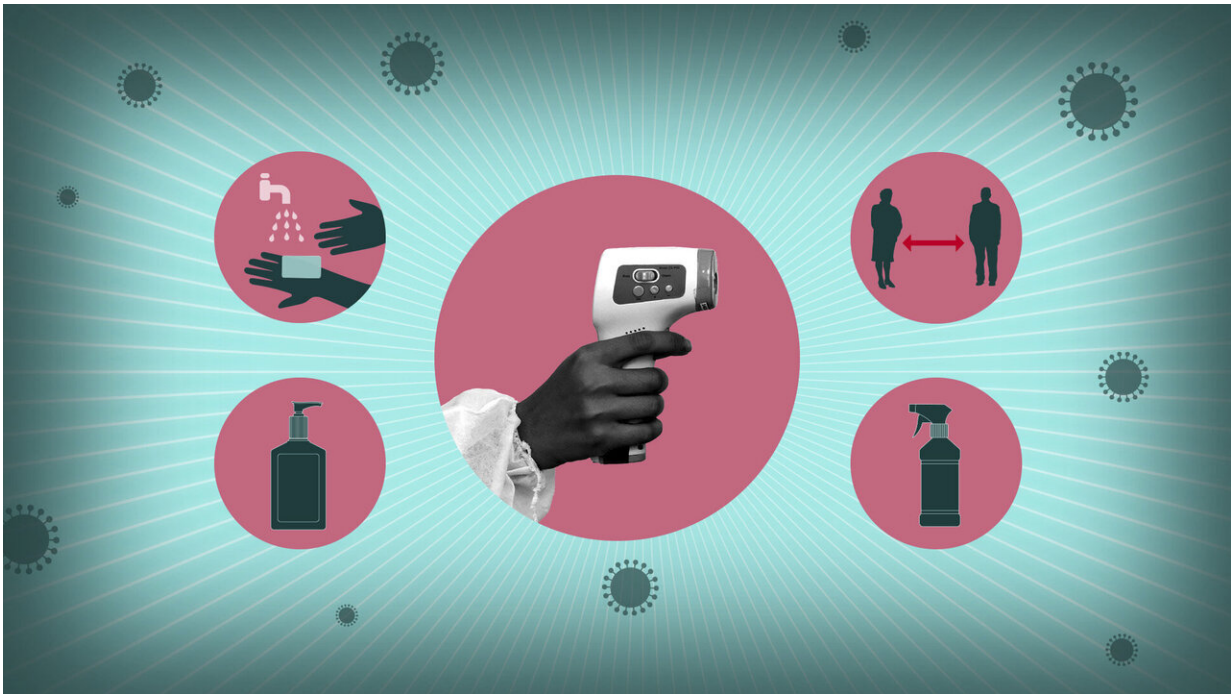
June 2 2020, by The Associated Press

Illustration by Peter Hamlin

Will temperature checks of employees make workplaces safe?

No, not completely. They can help reduce the risk of COVID-19 infections but shouldn't be the only safety measure employers take.

Some employers are following White House guidelines to screen

workers for a fever with daily temperature checks to help prevent the spread of infections.

But screening for fevers alone won't eliminate risk. People with the virus can be contagious without a fever, so it's still important for employers to increase space between workers, disinfect surfaces and encourage [hand washing](#).

A person's temperature can be taken with a no-touch infrared thermometer pointed at the forehead, and workers can use the devices to take their own temperatures, using hand sanitizer before and after.

However, the accuracy of infrared thermometers can be thrown off by headbands or bandannas that make a person too hot, or by cosmetic wipes that cool the skin, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The FDA says the thermometers should be used in a draft-free area and out of [direct sunlight](#).

What's a normal body temperature and what's feverish? The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention gives 100.4 degrees as a guideline for [fever](#).

Citation: Will temperature checks of employees make workplaces safe? (2020, June 2) retrieved 23 May 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-temperature-employees-workplaces-safe.html